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ABSTRACT

This research report focuses on the latent content of textbooks, the information attempting to instruct the child in ethical and moral values. Textbooks being used in the average classrooms in the United States today in grades one through six were examined and analyzed to discover the way the two sexes are portrayed and the types of behavior encouraged for each. The major focus of this analysis was textbook illustrations. Three major classifications were used: age, race and sex of individuals portrayed. Illustrations of adults comprise 28% of the pictures in the first grade and 73% in the sixth grades. Eighty-one er cent of the illustrations portrayed whites, while only 8% portray blacks. The percentage of illustrations of females varies by grade level from 32% in the second grade to only 20% by the sixth grade. The world of boys is shown as one of action and energy; the world of girls is shown as one of passivity, watching, and waiting for boys. While men are shown in over 150 occupational roles, almost all the women in textbooks are housewives. Science was discovered to have the most male oriented tests. Suggestions for what individuals can do about biased textbooks are listed for students, teachers, teacher groups, administrators, and parents and community groups. (MKM)

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BIASED TEXTBOOKS

LENORE J. WEITZMAN
AND DIANE RIZZO

Images of Males and Females In Elementary School Textbooks In Five Subject Areas

THE RESOURCE CENTER
ON SEX ROLES IN EDUCATION

What You Can Do About Biased Textbooks

CS 002 419

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Preface

Textbooks clearly represent a powerful mechanism of providing our children with a vision of the world about them. Not only do they provide them with a vision of what the world is like, but also what is important in the world around them. Children learn about what is good, who and what is to be valued, and how they should conduct their own lives. Seldom have we given adequate attention to the messages that are subtly conveyed to children.

The past ten years have seen an increasing amount of attention being devoted to gaining an understanding of the messages of textbooks. Racial and ethnic minorities were the first to raise questions about the omission of their contributions and role in our society, and the stereotyped ways that they were presented. Women are now beginning to document the similar omissions of their contributions and role, and the negative stereotyped ways they have been presented.

The following research represents one of the most comprehensive studies of the presentation of men and women in textbooks that has been completed to date. Lenore Weitzman and Dianne Rizzo have provided an excellent analysis and description of the problem. The patterns of omission and stereotyping are clearly documented.

Documentation is not enough. Teachers, parents, students, policy makers, and other interested persons must act. Each of us can contribute to bringing about change in textbooks. A list of specific action steps is included to encourage you to accept the responsibility of helping to provide our children with textbooks that provide alternatives. Textbooks that portray the diversity of our society and the life styles of individuals. And textbooks that encourage and inspire them to develop their talents, abilities and potential in the manner that is uniquely theirs.

The Resource Center on Sex Roles in Education

Images of Males and Females In Elementary School Textbooks In Five Subject Areas

LENORE J. WEITZMAN AND DIANE RIZZO

Despite recent technological advances the textbook remains a cornerstone for our educational system. The textbook represents the officially prescribed body of knowledge which the school age child is to master. It is thus an important and unique authority for a young child.

Although the primary function of textbooks is to convey information about a specific subject area, textbooks also attempt to instruct the child in ethical and moral values. They portray what is good, desirable and just. They provide the child with a vision of the future and aid him or her in establishing personal goals for the future. Thus, at the same time that a child is learning history and mathematics, books are also influencing values and aspirations. The results are that textbooks actually provide two distinct forms of knowledge to the young reader. The first kind of knowledge consists of information and skills in a specific subject. The second kind of information consists of ethical prescriptions, a vision of the good life and the motivations and incentives to attain it.

This second type of information, what sociologists refer to as the "latent content" of textbooks, also conveys images of appropriate male and female behavior. Textbooks provide norms and standards for how men, women, boys and girls should act. This research report focuses on the latent content of textbooks: it examines and analyzes the ways the two sexes are portrayed and the types of behavior encouraged for each.

Methodology

1. Age Distribution in Textbooks

The object of this research was to systematically analyze the textbooks being used in the average classrooms in the United States today in grades 1 through 6. Instead of examining the current best sellers, or the most innovative books, we sought to sample books that had been used in most schools during the past five years. In this way we hoped that our study would reflect the situation in the typical classroom in the United States, not just the avant garde in education. An expert panel of educators and publishers was consulted to determine the most widely used textbooks over a five-year period[1] in science, mathematics, reading, spelling and social studies.[2]

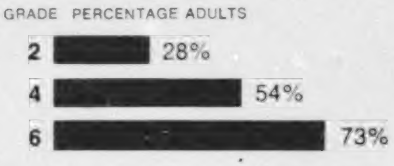
The major focus of this analysis was the textbook illustrations, as they provided a single uniform indicator with which to compare the different series. Each person in each illustration was categorized along 50 different dimensions including age, sex, race, expression, activity, and occupation. The coded data provided the basis, for a systematic analysis of the

representation of males and females, as well as the differences by grade level and subject area.

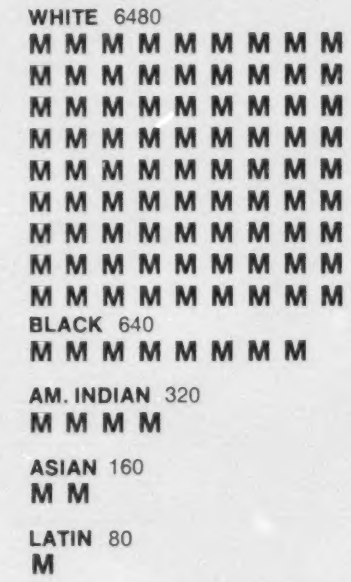
Major Findings

In examining the people in the world of textbooks, three major classifications were used: age, race and sex.

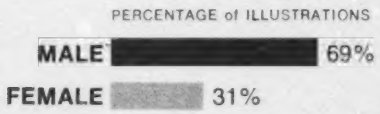
2. Percentage Adults by Grade Level



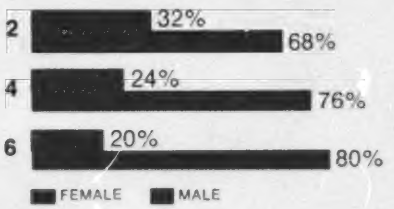
3. Racial Distribution of Textbook Illustrations



4. Sex Distribution in Textbooks



5. Sex Distribution by Grade Level



Age With regard to age, we found that the majority of the pictures, 57%, are children, while adults are 43% as shown in Figure 1. The large number of children in the illustrations makes it easier for a child to identify with the pictures and, therefore, to assimilate the lesson.

However, as Figure 2 indicates, the higher the grade level, the larger the percentage of adults. While adults are only 28% of the pictures in the first grade, by the sixth grade they are 73% of the total. Thus the textbook world shifts from the world of the child to the world of the adult. And, as the child grows older, he or she is also supposed to shift to adult role models—to imagine the self as an adult and to learn what behavior is appropriate for an adult.

Race With regard to race, we found that the textbook world is primarily a white world. As shown in Figure 3, whites are 81% of the illustrations, while only 8% are black, and even fewer are American Indian, Latin, Chicano or Asian. This underrepresentation of minorities means that the minority child is more likely to feel excluded—and will have more difficulty in identifying with the textbook characters. In addition, all children are deprived of a well-rounded picture of our society.

As with age, the proportion of minority persons changes with the grade level of the textbook. In each series the proportion of minority persons decreases as the grade level of the textbooks increases. Thus 33% of the illustrations are of minority persons in the first grade, but this decreases to 26% by the 6th grade. In math the percentage of minority persons declines from 25% to 15%; and in science from 11% to 8%. Thus with each successive year, in each series, nonwhites are increasingly excluded from the world of textbooks.

Sex Since women comprise 53% of the U.S. population, one might logically expect half of the illustrations to be female. However, females are only 31% of the textbook total—while males are 69%, as illustrated in Figure 4. Of the total of over 8,000 pictures analyzed, more than 5,500 are male. Males overwhelmingly predominate.

The percentage of females varies by grade level. They are 32% in the second grade but decline to only 20% by the sixth grade.

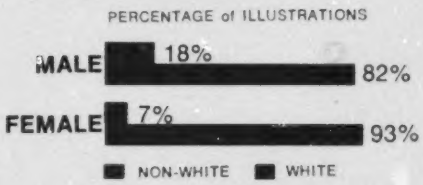
This means that by the sixth grade there are four pictures of males for every one picture of a female. The percentage of males, in contrast, increases with each grade level, as is vividly illustrated in Figure 5. As a greater proportion of the pictures become adults, women become less numerous, and by implication, less important as role models.

This declining representation of females is particularly striking in some of the series. For example, in spelling, 43% are females in the second grade, but by the time we reach the sixth grade the percentage has declined to a mere 15%. In science, it drops from 36% to 18%.

When we combine the sex and race categories, we find that minority females are doubly disadvantaged. As Figure 6 indicates, there are only half as many minority females as minority males.

In summary, the data indicate that the textbook world is a world of

6. Race by Sex in Textbooks



white males, and as the textbooks increase in sophistication, with each grade level, they become increasingly adult-oriented, and women become increasingly invisible.

It is difficult to understand the impact that these pictures have on children without examining the illustrations themselves. However, several statistically significant differences in the illustrations should be noted.

Images of Boys and Girls

In the pictures of children, there is a strong contrast between the activities of boys and girls. First, the world of boys is one of action and energy. In contrast, girls are typically shown as passive, watching and waiting for boys. Second, most boys are shown outdoors while a greater percentage of girls are shown indoors.

A third difference is in the traits encouraged in boys and girls. Boys are encouraged to be skillful and adventurous. In contrast, girls are encouraged to pursue homemaking and grooming. Throughout the textbooks girls are shown in domestic roles doing household chores, caring for others, helping their mothers, sewing, baking, mopping, making beds, dusting, and washing dishes. One message for a young girl is that she should learn to help, care for, and serve others.

Girls are also encouraged to make themselves attractive: they are shown combing their hair, trying on clothes, shopping for pretty things, sitting under the hair dryer and being rewarded for their attractiveness. It is clear that feminine success is reserved for the pretty girl.

These pictures project the message that success for girls will lie in serving, pleasing, and watching others, while success for boys will result from independence and activity. If a little girl identifies with the pictures of girls in the texts, she will be assimilating a lesson of subservience and passivity. At the same time the little boy is learning to express independence and creativity.

A fourth difference in the images of boys and girls is in their emotional expression. Girls express a much wider range of emotions. They are affectionate and often shown hugging and nurturing pets and dolls. Girls also frighten easily and are often shown crying. In contrast, boys almost never cry, and the young boy is taught that to be a man he must control his emotions. Thus, in the same way that girls are constrained by images which stereotype them as passive, boys are constrained by images which stereotype them as strong and silent. The textbooks thereby encourage both boys and girls to limit themselves—to be less than full human beings.

Finally, it is interesting to note that in a significant minority of the illustrations with both boys and girls, most of the action centers around boys. Boys act, and girls watch. Often the girls seem thrilled just to watch the boys perform.

Images of Men and Women

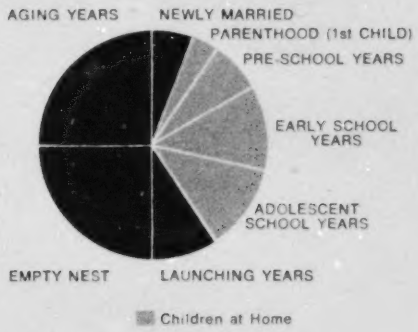
An examination of the images of adults in textbooks indicates that the adult world is a world of men. Men are shown in over 150 occupational roles—they are doctors, chefs, farmers, chemists, waiters, carpenters, pilots, etc. The illustrations of adult men are glamorous and exciting—and they stimulate young boys to dream about a wide range of occupational choices.

In contrast, *choice* is almost nonexistent for girls because the adult women in textbooks are all the same. Although adult women in our society do many things, almost all the women in textbooks are housewives.

The housewife in textbooks is hard to believe: she has little to do,

everything goes smoothly, and she is always happy and calm. The reality and difficulties of managing a household (juggling the demands of husband, children, cleaning, cooking, shopping, laundry, entertaining, bookkeeping) and the many important volunteer activities of housewives should be discussed so that both boys and girls can understand their mother's complicated role.

7. Married Woman's Adult Years



Although the textbook housewife seems artificial, the image of *mothers* in textbooks is consistently positive—in fact, it is the most positive female image in textbooks.[1] Mothers are appreciated and loved and there is a very warm and happy bond between mothers and their children. The problem is that motherood is presented as the *only option* for girls—motherhood is shown as a full-time lifetime occupation. But, in reality, as Figure 7 shows, the average woman in the U.S. spends only one-third of her adult years raising children. Most women will want to work outside the home—or will have to work because of economic necessity—in the other two-thirds of their adult years. If our daughters are told to think only of motherhood in their futures, they will not develop the skills they will need for two-thirds of their lives.

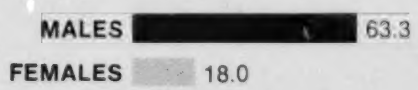
Today, 40% of the United States labor force is female. In fact, 90% of all women in this country work outside their home at some point in their lives. One of the most frustrating experiences of working women is discovering too late that they don't have the skills or training they need for the jobs they want—or the jobs that pay well. And yet, the textbooks are encouraging the same mistake in our daughters. It is totally inaccurate to portray motherhood and work as mutually exclusive. Most girls will want both. The educational system is thwarting and simply *cheating our daughters* if it doesn't provide them with the skills and aspirations for both.

Although most textbook women are confined to their homes, a few are shown working. They are teachers, librarians, sales clerks and nurses. Thus, girls' occupational choices, when they exist at all, are severely limited.

In contrast, by providing boys with over 150 occupational choices, the textbooks encourage young boys to imagine themselves in a wide variety of roles—and to dream of becoming anything from a laborer to a doctor.

While boys learn that an exciting future awaits them, the implicit message may also be a heavy responsibility. It is clear that men *must* have jobs. In fact, all men seem to do is work. This overwhelming occupational focus—and the frenetic activity encouraged in boys—may be what leads to so many ulcers and heart attacks in adult men. As Figure 8 shows, the death rate from heart attacks among men in the prime of their lives is four times as high as it is for women—and yet the textbooks seem to be stimulating the same hyperactivity in young boys.

8. Mortality Rates from Heart Disease

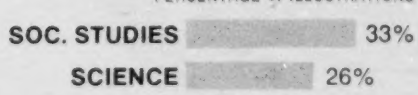


Boys who are pressured to think only of work are being constrained in the same way as girls who are told to think only of motherhood. To confine either sex to stereotyped roles is to arbitrarily restrict their individual talents.

Subject Differences

There are systematic differences in the treatment that women receive in the different subject areas.

9. Percentage Female by Subject Area



As Figure 9 shows, the percentage of women varies from a high of 33% in social studies to a low of 26% in science. These differences, although they may not appear to be dramatic, are important in understanding why children like certain subjects and want to major in them—or why, in contrast, they may feel unwelcome or excluded because of the covert

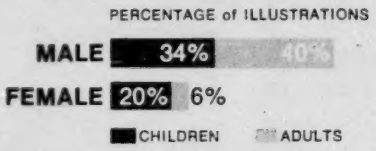
messages they receive.

Science In science, the most male-oriented series, three out of every four pictures are males. Throughout the science series the textbooks seem to imply that females have no place in the world of science.

For example, when we open the first grade science textbook, on the very first page we are told that we are going to learn about making things move. Immediately we learn it is boys who make things move. The next few pictures show boys riding bicycles and pushing objects. The following page contains a picture of a girl and movement, but here we find that the *wind* is propelling her balloon. It is clear she has *no control* over the movement of the balloon. The boy on the same page is *throwing* his basketball. This contrast continues throughout the series. When boys are shown, they are actively involved in experiments; looking through microscopes; pouring chemicals and experimenting. Boys control the action, and it is they who demonstrate scientific principles of motion, growth, energy and light.

In contrast, when girls are shown, they observe. They are shown smelling soap and perfume, and looking at rocks, thermometers and their sunburns. In some pictures girls are used as the objects of experiments, being injected or having balls thrown at them.

10. Age and Sex in Science Textbooks



Adult women fare even worse then girls do in the science series. As Figure 10 shows, while girls are only 20% of the total illustrations, adult women are a mere 6%. In some grades, such as the 2nd grade science book, the percentage of adult women is as low as 1%. This means that in the 2nd grade science book, there are no adult women in 99 out of every 100 pictures.

Although our knowledge of women in science is terribly incomplete—because of the burdens they have had in gaining recognition for their work—at a minimum the science books could mention Madame Curie or Mary Leaky. Instead, science textbooks give children the impression that no woman has—or can—play a role in building our scientific knowledge. The scientific world is presented as a masculine domain: all scientists are male, only men do scientific work. The epitomy of the male prototype in science is the romantic emphasis on the astronaut. But, once again, it is only boys who are shown in astronaut costumes and in the text only boys are told to imagine that they can explore the moon.

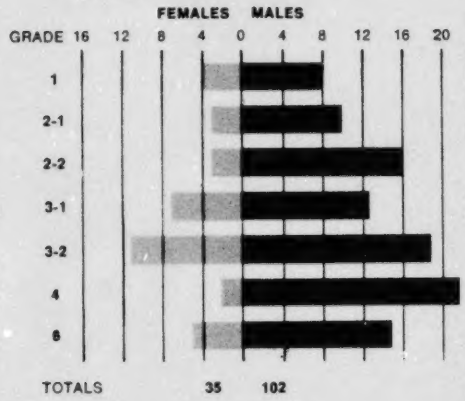
Mathematics In the mathematics textbooks most males are shown as mathematically competent, but some of the females have difficulty with simple addition and are shown as baffled by counting to 3 or 20. These "dumb girl" images are not only derogatory and insulting to a girl student trying to learn mathematics—but they clearly contradict reality, for girls do better than boys in mathematics in elementary school. Adult women are also stereotyped: they deal only with math problems of dividing pies and shopping, and some are portrayed as mathematically incompetent. It seems ironic that housewives—who use so much math in balancing bank accounts and managing household budgets—are shown as baffled by simple addition.

Another feature of the mathematics textbooks is the frequent use of sex as a category for dividing people. For example, in explaining set theory, girls are set off as people who sew and cry. When sex is used as a category, girls are told that they can be classified as different—as typically emotional or domestic.

There is also strong sex-stereotyping in the examples and math prob-

lems. Despite the Equal Pay Act of 1963 we found math problems in which girls were paid less than boys for the same work. It would be hard to imagine a textbook publisher allowing this example if a black boy was being paid less than a white boy.

11. Males and Females in Story Titles Reading Series



Reading In the reading series, story titles provide a good indicator of the relative importance of males and females. Boys predominate in every grade. In Figure 11, we see that in total, there are 102 stories about boys, while only 35 are about girls. When we examine the stories, we find that even the female heroines reinforce the traditional female roles. For example, Kirsten, the heroine of a third-grade story, surprises the girls who have rejected her by making Danish cookies and having the most popular booth at the school fair. The moral in this story is that girls can succeed by cooking and serving others.

But Kirsten slights herself and the very skill that has earned her favor. She says: "It's easy; even I can do it and you know how stupid I am." Thus, even when girls succeed, they tend to deprecate themselves.

In contrast, boys show a great deal of confidence and camaraderie. Among both boys and men, male pride and male bonds are very strong.

In the reading textbooks there are two kinds of roles in which females predominate. Although they are only a small percentage of the pictures, they are significant. First, more women than men are shown as mean or evil characters. It is women who are overrepresented among the witches and villains of the textbooks. By representing evil characters as women, the textbooks further reinforce the secondary status that women are accorded.

The second role in which there are more females than males is among people who are shown as clumsy or stupid, and as the foolish objects of a joke.

Spelling The antagonism toward women is even more pronounced in the spelling series. In the early spelling books the vowels are shown as females and the consonants are shown as males. Although one might expect statements about how necessary vowels are, or how we can't make words without them, instead the female vowels are treated in an antagonistic and derogatory manner. In the dialogue women are yelled at, kicked out, pushed around, used as puppets, and told to shut up.

Social Studies The last series, social studies, is unique in several ways. It is the only series with a strong family orientation, and it has the largest percentage of females. Here, mothers are shown as skillful, and they play an important role in passing on their cultural tradition to their daughters. There are many pictures of mothers in other cultures teaching their daughters specific skills.

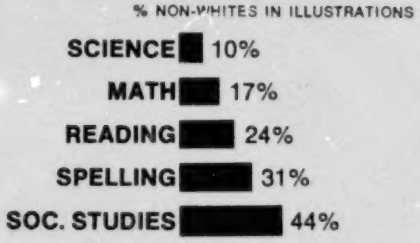
The social studies series is also unique in its presentation of men in a parental role. There are many warm and tender pictures of fathers and sons; fathers instruct their sons in specific vocational skills—as well as in the ways of life.

Although we applaud these pictures of fathers and sons, it should be noted that fathers teach their sons—but not their daughters. Similarly, mothers teach only their daughters. Thus, once again boys learn vocational skills and girls learn domestic skills. Because of the two sexes are segregated, and each sex learns a limited range of skills, traditional sex roles are perpetuated. Today, boys need to learn to manage in the home and to be parents, and girls need to learn about vocations and the out-

doors. Again the textbooks could expand rather than thwart the children's potential.

The social studies series is also unique in its presentation of racial and ethnic minorities and the attention it gives to people of other cultures. As Figure 12 shows, the percentage of minorities varies by series—from a low of 10% in science to a high of 44% in social studies. Social studies is by far the best series in its representation of nonwhite and minority persons. The large number of blacks in this series demonstrates that pressure against textbook publishers *can* have some effect.

12. Percentage of Non-Whites in Textbooks



However, it is disappointing to note that publishers have not yet made the same effort with regard to women. Although this series has the largest percentage of females in pictures, still two out of every three are male. Once we move away from the home, we find that women are absent from the discussion of history, government, and society. The ways of life are still portrayed as "The Ways of Man."

Conclusion

After studying these textbooks for two years, we cannot help but conclude that our children are being *crippled* by the latent messages in their textbooks. Why not examine the textbooks you use again: count the number of males and females in the first hundred pages and examine the ways in which each sex is stereotyped. We urge you to examine the textbooks yourselves because only you can change the impact that these textbooks will have on our daughters and our sons and on the next generation of adults.

The Resource Center on Sex Roles in Education has developed suggestions for what students, teachers, teacher groups, administrators, parents and community groups can do to counteract the covert messages in textbooks. These are attached for your information.

What is most sorely lacking in the textbooks, and thus most desperately needed in the classroom, is a new image of adult women and a wide range of adult role models for young girls. Both girls and boys should learn about the history of women in this country; about women's suffrage, and the current women's liberation movement and struggle for equality; and about the female heroines of our country and our world. Girls of all racial and ethnic minority groups need to understand the roles that their foremothers have played in the development of our society. What a difference it would make if young girls could point to adult women with pride—and feel that they had an exciting life ahead. This is an imperative for our children, ourselves and our society.

[1] The sample was drawn from the teacher associations in each of these areas, faculty at educational and research institutions, and the publishers of textbooks mentioned as leaders in the field. In each subject area we tried to determine the books with the largest sales and usage pattern over the five-year period from 1967 to 1972.

[2] The consensus on the most widely used series varied greatly by discipline. In spelling there was almost complete agreement and the McGraw Hill series "Basic Goals and Spelling" was used. In science the Harcourt Brace series, "Concepts in Science" was used and in mathematics the Houghton Mifflin series, "Modern School Mathematics-Structure and Use," was analyzed. In reading two series appeared equal, and both were used in the analysis. These were Scott Foresman's series "New Basic Readers," and Ginn and Co.'s "Basic Readers — 100 Edition." In social studies, we found the least amount of consensus, as the field was undergoing major change. We therefore deviated from our established pattern and chose a newer series, Harcourt Brace's "The Social Sciences — Concepts and Values," which appeared to be capturing the current market.

[3] Mothers, however, conform to the textbook norm of domestic women and are not active. The only women in textbooks who are active are aunts and grandmothers—women who have no children of their own or who are beyond the childbearing age—as if the textbooks have to dichotomize the role of mother from those roles which show women as active and energetic people.

What You Can Do About Biased Textbooks

THE RESOURCE CENTER ON SEX ROLES IN EDUCATION

Changing Stereotyped Textbooks and Their Impact

Individual awareness of racism and sexism in textbooks and instructional materials is an important first step in changing biased materials and their impact on all of us. Each of us has a responsibility for using our awareness to bring about some changes and support others who are working in this area. The following represents a checklist of the things that students, teachers, administrators, parents and community groups can do to "act" on their awareness.

Students

Look for and learn to recognize bias that may be found in textbooks, library books, television programs, magazines, etc.

Ask your librarians to help you identify non-racist, non-sexist books. Select books that help you understand people in other cultures or situations than your own.

Point out bias in materials when you recognize it in materials you are using in school.

Do a study of your textbooks. Ask your teacher if you can do this with other students as a project or as part of your own school work.

Write letters to people who can help you learn more about bias in textbooks.

Write letters to publishers and let them know when you have found bias in textbooks.

Rewrite stories or textbooks to show how they might have been written to avoid bias or from another person's point of view.

Teachers in the Classroom

"Level" with the students in your classroom. Point out racist or sexist bias of books or materials. Help them learn to identify sources of bias and important omissions in the materials.

Develop classroom activities around identifying bias found in television, textbooks, movies, library books, magazines, etc.

Incorporate the development of critical reading skills as an instructional objective for all your teaching, not just when special efforts are being made to identify bias in materials.

Identify or develop supplementary materials which can help "correct" some of the bias of available materials.

Design student research projects. These might include a study of their own textbook materials or their identification of supplementary materials.

Assign student papers, themes, term papers, or other activities on topics or persons not usually covered in textbooks or materials.

When students have completed activities identifying bias, have them write letters and send reports to administrators, publishers, community groups and organizations working to reduce bias in textbooks.

Invite local resource persons into your classroom to provide additional information and work with students on special projects and activities.

Ask students to rewrite materials, write their own materials on subjects omitted from the textbook, or rewrite the material from other persons' points of view.

Use bulletin boards, posters, pictures, magazines, and other materials to expose students to information commonly excluded from traditional materials.

Develop a classroom collection of non-racist, non-sexist reading materials for students. Identify books that students may be encouraged to seek out in their personal reading.

Teacher Groups

Form a committee to investigate the process of textbook selection. Where local or state groups or officials have responsibility for buying books, meet with them to learn their criteria for selection and procedures for identifying supplementary materials. Let them know your needs and sensitize them to sources of racism and sexism.

Request and use funds available for instructional materials in building supplementary materials resources for your classrooms/schools.

Develop a plan and organize in-service training sessions on biased textbooks and instructional materials. Several sessions should be included to deal with identifying racism and sexism, methods of analyzing materials, developing supplementary materials, and classroom activities for identifying bias.

Meet with school librarians and ask them to assist teachers in the identification of non-racist, non-sexist, multi-ethnic books and materials. Urge them to order and provide resources for supplementary materials.

Conduct a study and periodic review of the bias found in the textbooks and materials used in your classrooms/schools.

Call on district or state curriculum development specialists to provide guidelines, materials training, and other resources related to non-racist, non-sexist books and materials.

Include provisions for in-service training and funds for supplementary materials in collective bargaining or teacher negotiations.

Organize a central file in your school or district of supplementary materials, curriculum outlines, or other resources you have used for identifying bias and supplementing the curriculum.

Develop a list of local resource persons, materials and other resources for use in the classroom.

Identify non-traditional publishing firms, alternative presses, and other groups developing materials in this area. Make sure that information about these groups is distributed to all teachers.

Publicize studies, workshops, and other efforts to improve materials or reduce the impact of biased materials.

Administrators

Develop a policy statement outlining your concern about the elimination of racist and sexist stereotypes in textbooks and library books.

Appoint a task force to investigate the problem in your community and make recommendations for action.

Develop guidelines for all personnel to follow in purchasing and using textbooks and other instructional materials.

Earmark a proportion of funds to be used for the purchase of non-racist, non-sexist supplementary materials.

Develop and implement a plan for in-service training of all personnel who select, purchase, recommend or use textbooks or other instructional materials.

Direct supervisors and curriculum developers to develop resources and materials for assisting classroom teachers in reducing the impact of biased materials.

Call on state departments of education, teacher training institutions and and professional associations to provide materials, workshops and technical assistance.

Interpret the problems of biased textbooks and materials to parents, community groups, and policy making boards. Let them know of your concerns and how they may assist in solving the problem.

Parents and Community Groups

Read the textbooks and materials that your children are using and identify sources of bias where they exist.

Meet with your children's teachers and principals. Learn how the problem

is being handled in your school.

Work with other parents or groups to raise their awareness of the problem of biased materials.

Meet with school board members to outline your concerns. Support expenditures for supplementary materials and in-service training for school personnel.

Sponsor a community workshop on bias in textbooks and instructional materials. Include information that will assist parents in pointing out stereotypes in television, magazines, and other materials found in the home.

Organize a study of the bias of textbooks used in your community schools. Publicize the results and make recommendations for change.

Establish a special collection of books in the school or public library which features non-racist, non-sexist, and multi-ethnic books.

Identify how textbooks are selected in your community. Write to and/or meet with persons responsible for textbook selection at local and state levels to voice your concerns, urging purchase of quality materials and inclusion of supplementary materials.

Write to textbook publishers and indicate your dissatisfaction with biased materials. Support examples of non-racist, non-sexist books that have been developed.

Recognize the efforts of teachers and administrators who are taking positive actions to deal with the problem.

Organize a task force or speakers bureau to meet with other groups to extend their understanding of the problem and actions that may be taken.